



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# **EASEMENT PROGRAMS**

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# *The Goal of Easement Programs*

- Federal programs established to:
  - Help farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture
  - Assist landowners to protect, restore and enhance grasslands
  - Provide assistance to private parties to protect, restore and enhance wetlands
  - Restore and enhance priority species in forest ecosystems



# *What are Conservation Easements?*

- An interest in land, specified in a deed, that gives specific rights in a property to a local government or non-governmental entity
- Agriculture conservation easements are the same in nature. However, each easement is tailored to the specific farm being protected
- In exchange for payments, participating landowners agree not to convert their land to non-agricultural uses
- Landowners retain certain rights in an easement deed, such as hunting and leasing rights or the right to farm



A photograph of a forest stream with mossy rocks and dense green foliage. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

## *What Easement Programs are Available?*

- Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP)





# *Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)*

- Provides matching funds to local entities and organizations to purchase conservation easements
- Prevents conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses
- USDA will provide up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value, but a partnering entity is required to share at least 25 percent of the easement value



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, irregularly shaped wetland area with a mix of green and brown vegetation. A small, dark pond is visible within this area. Surrounding the wetland are various agricultural fields, some green and some brown, with scattered trees and a few buildings in the distance.

# *Wetlands Reserve Program* *(WRP)*

- Provides incentives to landowners to retire marginal land from agriculture
- Landowner receives financial and technical assistance to restore, protect and enhance wetlands
- Participants control access to lands





# **Grassland Reserve Program** **(GRP)**

- Helps landowners to restore and protect grassland while maintaining the areas as grazing lands
- Priority for enrollment:
  - Expiring acreage from CRP
  - High cultural or historical significance
  - High ecological value (T&E Species)
  - High conversion rate



A lush green forest with a stream flowing over mossy rocks. The water is clear and reflects the surrounding greenery. The rocks are covered in vibrant green moss, and the forest floor is dense with various plants and trees.

# *Healthy Forest Reserve Program* *(HFRP)*

- Established for restoration and enhancement of forest ecosystems to:
  - Promote threatened or endangered species
  - Improve biodiversity
  - Enhance carbon sequestration
- Provides financial assistance in the form of easement payments and cost-share for conservation practices





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**For more information on these programs, visit  
the USDA/NRCS-TN website.**

[www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs](http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs)

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